REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Examiner is thanked for the Office Action mailed August 6, 2008. The status of the application is as follows:

- Claims 1-9 and 12-18 are pending, and claims 19-22 have been added;
- The specification is objected to;
- Claims 1-3 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson et al. (US 6,928,314) in view of Mistretta (US 2003/0060698).

The objections and rejections are discussed below.

The Allowed Claims

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating claims 12-18 are allowed

The Objection to Claims 4-8

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 4-8, which depend from claim 1, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Applicant reserves the right to amend the claims as suggested by the Office at a later time if desired.

The Objection to the Specification

The specification is objected to for improper language and format for the abstract of the disclosure. Applicant has submitted a replacement Abstract, which renders this objection moot.

The Rejection of Claims 1-3 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-3 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson et al. in view of Mistretta. This rejection should be withdrawn because the combination of Johnson et al. and Mistretta does not teach or suggest all the limitations of the subject claims and, therefore, fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obvious with respect to the subject claims.

> To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, (CCPA 1974). MPEP §2143.03.

Independent **claim 1** is directed to a method that includes ***determining a reference direction in each cross sectional slice*** and ***creating the object data set*** by concatenating the cross sectional slices, ***each cross sectional slice being orientated so that the reference directions in the cross sectional slices are aligned***. The combination of Johnson et al. and Mistretta does not teach or suggest all of these limitations. In particular, the Office asserts that column 14, lines 26-32 and 45-56, of Johnson et al. discloses determining a reference direction in each cross sectional slice and creating an object data set with cross sectional slice that are orientated so that the reference directions in the cross sectional slices are aligned. The Office is mistaken.

In contrast, Johnson et al. discloses changing the ***view direction*** for a ***volume of data*** so that a selected feature is at a center of the view. (See column 14, lines 14-26). More particularly, column 14, lines 26-32, of Johnson et al. discloses that the view direction for the current view of the volume of data is represented via a dot with a line segment extending from the dot in the direction of the center of the view and that the user can control the view direction of the volume of data by moving the indicator in a scout view. (See column 14, lines 26-32) Column 14, lines 45-56, of Johnson et al discloses several interactive features or tools for processing the volume of data, such as windowing and leveling the data, zooming and re-orienting the camera view, making measurements, selectively inspecting portions of the volume of data, and selectively selecting slices to display as straightened images.

However, neither column 14, lines 26-32, nor column 14, lines 45-56, teaches or suggests determining a reference direction in each cross sectional slice or creating the object data set with cross sectional slices, each cross sectional slice being orientated so that the reference directions in the cross sectional slices are aligned. Accordingly, the combination of Johnson et al. and Mistretta does not establish a *prima facie* case of obvious with respect to claim 1, and thus this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 2, which depends from claim 1, recites that determining the reference direction in each cross sectional slice includes determining an initial reference direction in the initial cross sectional slice, and deriving a reference direction in the at least one further cross sectional slice from the initial reference direction by propagation. The Office asserts these claim aspects are

taught in claim 1 and column 22, lines 5-31, of Johnson et al. The Office is incorrect Claim 1 relates to a dual display mode in which images of a structure at two different positions are simultaneously displayed for a series of viewpoints along a structure, and column 22, lines 1-31, discloses the two positions are supine and prone and a technique for switching between dual and single display mode. The cited claim and section of Johnson et al. is silent regarding the subject claim aspects. Thus, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 3, which depends from claim 2, recites that the determined initial reference direction is propagated directly into each of the at least one further slice. The Office asserts that column 14, lines 26-32 and 45-56, of Johnson et al. discloses these claim aspects. As discussed *supra*, these sections of Johnson et al. relate to changing the view direction of a volume of data and manipulating the volume data via windowing, leveling, zooming, etc. These sections of Johnson et al. do not contemplate the subject claim aspects. Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and is allowable at least by virtue of this dependency

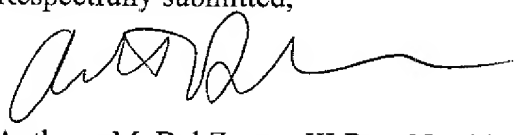
New Claims 19-22

Newly added claims 19-22 emphasize various aspects. No new matter has been added. The art of record does not teach or suggest these claims Entry and allowance of claims 19-22 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims distinguish patentably and non-obviously over the prior art of record. An early indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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